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XV.—*Notes on an apparently undescribed* Varanus *from Tenasserim and on other* Reptilia *and* Amphibia.—*By* W. T. Blanford, F. R. S.

[Received November 3rd;—Read December 7th, 1881.]

(With Plate XVI.)

The notes appended are on a few reptiles from very different parts of the dependencies of British India, and on a species of Pseudophidian from the Himalayas. The *Varanus* described has been in my possession for at least three years, and I hoped to identify it with some known species, but I have not succeeded in doing so.

Varanus macrolepis, sp. nov.

V. *digitis longiusculis; naribus oblongis, obliquis, ab oculis parum distantibus, subtus spectantibus; squamis nuchalibus magnis, planulatis, rotundatis; dorsalibus paullo minoribus, sed multo majoribus quam in cæteris speciebus Indicis vel Burmanis, ovatis, obtuse carinatis; corpore caudâque exempli juvenis fasciis latis nigris transversis ornatis.*

Description.—The toes are as long as in *V. dracæna* and *V. nebulosus*, the middle fore toe being considerably longer than half the distance between the eye and the end of the snout. The nostril is peculiar: it is in the anterior portion of a single large shield, and the opening is oblique, directed backwards and downwards. The nasal shield is much nearer to the eye than to the end of the snout, the distance from the latter being about twice that of the former. Tympanum rather smaller and rounder

than in the allied forms, the breadth being but little inferior to the height and the diameter less than the length of the eye.

All the scales of the upper part of the body are larger than in any other Indian or Burmese form. The scales of the nape above the neck are flat, about as broad as long and much larger than those on the head. The dorsal scales are oval and bluntly keeled, nearly as long as those of the nape, but narrower, and rather larger than those of the sides. A few smaller scales are interspersed, both on the back and nape. The ventral scales are nearly or quite as broad as long, not more than half as long as the larger dorsal scales; there are about eighty scales between the gular fold and the thighs. Scales above the limbs bluntly keeled.

The scales on the top of the head are flat and do not vary much in size; those in the middle of the superciliary region are slightly enlarged, but less so than in *V. nebulosus*.

Tail very much compressed with the upper lateral scales minute, only half the length of those on the lower portion of the tail, where several longitudinal rows are larger and sharply keeled.

In the young individual examined, the colour of the body and tail consists of broad transverse alternating black and yellow bands, the black bands on the body being more than twice as broad as the intervening yellow rings, but, on the tail, the difference between the breadth of the two decreases. The black bands disappear upon the lower parts, except towards the end of the tail. There is a broad black band across the hinder parts of the neck, extending to the side in front of the shoulder, and giving out, on each side, a narrower black stripe that extends above the ear to the eye. There are three broad black bands between the shoulders and the thighs, one between the thighs, eight on the tail. None of the bands are broken up by spots or mottling on the upper parts. The limbs are blackish above with small yellow spots, yellow below with a tendency to dark transverse marks. The head and nape are uniform yellowish above; there are a few short vertical dark marks on the upper and lower labials.

The total length of the only specimen procured is 8·5 inches, of which the tail from the anus measures 4·5, head from hinder edge of tympanum to end of nose 1 inch, fore limb to end of middle toe 1·2, middle toe without claw 0·33, hind limb to end of fourth toe 1·45, fourth toe without claw, from division between third and fourth, 0·45, third from the same 0·37.

This well-marked species may be immediately distinguished from all other Indian forms by its peculiar nostril, situated in a single scale, by the larger scales on the upper part of the body, and especially by *the scales of the nape being larger than those above the head, or those on the back.* These structural differences will of course be found in adults. The colouration also is quite peculiar, but young *Varani* are very differently coloured

from adults, and it is probable that the bands of colour are not persistent in older individuals.

For the only specimen of this remarkable monitor that I have seen I am indebted to Mr. W. Davison, who obtained it in Tenasserim, and, I believe, in the neighbourhood of Tavoy. The specimen was carefully labelled, but the label, being of paper, has unfortunately become detached.

There is a Philippine species of *Hydrosaurus (H. nuchalis*, Gthr. P. Z. S. 1872, p. 145) that has somewhat similar, though much smaller, scales on the nape and back, but it is of course distinguished by the form and position of the nostrils.

Draco tæniopterus.

In J. A. S. B., 1878, Vol. XLVII, Part 2, p. 126, I noticed some specimens from near Tavoy, collected by Mr. Davison, and expressed a slight doubt as to whether they were identical with the typical *D. tæniopterus* described by Günther from Siam (Reptiles Brit. Ind., p. 126). On comparing the Tenasserim specimens with the type in the British Museum, I find they agree very fairly. In the latter the markings on the 'wings' are more distinct and darker; to see them in the Tenasserim form the wings should be held up against the light and looked through. There is a very small tubercle behind the orbit, and the nuchal crest is too rudimentary to be of any importance.

Naja tripudians.

A few snakes collected by Major Biddulph in Gilgit have been presented by him to the British Museum. Amongst them are three specimens of a cobra differing in colour and to some slight extent in structure from any Indian form known to me.

Of the three specimens two measure 4 feet 5 inches each, both being of precisely the same length, and one specimen is young, being only 1 foot 9 inches long. In the two larger specimens, the colour above is uniform dark brown, below white throughout with the exception of a few irregular dusky marks on the ventral scutes chiefly anteriorly and near the tail, the subcaudals being pretty dusky. The smaller specimen is light grey above with rather faint darker cross bands, angularly bent forward in the middle of the back, and rather broader than the interspaces. The lower parts are white with the exception of two dusky bands across the throat as frequently found in Indian cobras. Neither in the adults nor in the young is there any spectacle-mark or ocellus on the back of the neck, but in the young there is a blackish spot with indistinct edges on each side of the neck where the anterior dusky band crosses the ventral shields.

In the larger specimens there are 23 to 27 longitudinal series of scales on the neck, in the smaller 25 to 27, in all 23 round the middle of the body.

The number of ventrals in the three specimens is 203, 205, and 207, there are 72 pairs of subcaudals in two and 74 in the third, the smallest individual, in which the number of ventral shields is 207. It is manifest that this variety is more elongate than the forms usually found in India and the countries to the eastward. All of the varieties of cobra described in Günther's 'Reptiles of British India' have less than 200 ventrals. The colouration too is peculiar, especially in the young specimen, and remarkably similar to that in the Central Asiatic type described by Eichwald under the name of *Tomyris oxiana*.* This snake has since been shewn by Strauch,† who re-examined the original specimen, to be a true *Naja* closely allied to *N. tripudians*, but distinguished by the form of the head and the characters of the temporal shields. *N. oxiana* is founded on a young specimen, the only one hitherto recorded, 40 centimetres (15¾ inches) long, and having 202 ventrals and 66 pairs of subcaudals, so that it resembles the Gilgit snake in the great number of the former. The essential differences, however, are considered by Strauch to consist in the facts that in *N. oxiana* the length of the head is thrice the height and nearly twice the breadth in the temporal region (whereas in *N. tripudians* the length is only twice the height and one and a half times the breadth), and that there are two larger temporals in front in contact with the postoculars, the posterior temporals being numerous and scarcely larger than the back scales, whilst in the Indian cobra the temporals consist of 4 or 5 subequal shields.

Now in the Gilgit snakes the temporals vary in form. The two anterior are generally the largest, but the lower posterior temporal is nearly, sometimes quite, as large. The anterior lower temporal is in contact with 3 others. In each of the larger specimens 3 temporals are in contact with each occipital, in the smaller 4. I find precisely similar temporal shields in many Indian cobras in the British Museum. The head too in the Gilgit snakes is precisely similar in form to that of *N. tripudians*.

If, therefore, Strauch is correct in considering the distinctions he has pointed out in the type of *N. oxiana* of specific value, it is clear that the Gilgit snakes cannot be referred to that species. The temporals are so variable in form and number in cobras that, were there no other distinction, I should doubt whether the Central Asiatic form really deserved separation, but the shape of the head is a more important character. At the same time it is very interesting to find in Gilgit, where several birds and mammals belonging to Central Asiatic types occur, a cobra presenting so remarkable a similarity in colour and structure to the form described from Central Asia.

* Zool. Spec., III, p. 171: Fauna Casp. Cauc. p. 130, pl. xx.

† Bull. Acad. Sci. St. Pet. 1868, xiii, p. 81.

Ichthyophis glutinosus.

Peters, in his recent monograph* of the Cæcilians, gives as localities for this species (the *Epicrium glutinosum* of Günther's 'Reptiles of British India,' p. 441,) Ceylon, Siam, and Java, and, on Günther's authority, South India, Khasi hills, and Tenasserim. So far as I am aware, no Pseudophidian has hitherto been recorded from the Himalayas.

I received four or five years since, from the late Mr. Mandelli, two specimens of this species, obtained near Darjiling, and I find, in the British Museum, two more from the same locality, procured by Dr. Jerdon. In both my specimens, and in one of Dr. Jerdon's, the lateral band is wanting, but there is no structural difference from other specimens.

XVI.—*Second List of Rhopalocerous* Lepidoptera *from Port Blair, Andaman Islands, with Descriptions of, and Notes on, new and little-known Species and Varieties.—By* J. Wood-Mason, *Deputy Superintendent, Indian Museum, Calcutta, and* Lionel de Nicéville.

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(With Plate XIV.)

At the end of 1880, we contributed to this Journal an account of the Rhopalocerous portion of the collection of Lepidopterous insects formed during that year for the Indian Museum by Mr. F. A. de Roepstorff, an Assistant Superintendent on the Port Blair Establishment, to whose energetic labours zoologists are almost entirely indebted for such knowledge as they possess of the interesting Lepidopterous fauna of the Andaman Islands, for by far the greater number of the specimens belonging to both divisions of the order reported upon in 1877 by Mr. F. Moore was also collected by this officer. The collection sent to us in 1880 by Mr. de Roepstorff comprised no less than 90 distinct species, of which 25 had not been previously recorded. The present list is based upon a very fine collection (numbering more than 1000 specimens in the finest condition, and especially valuable as furnishing us with the opposite sexes of most of the species) sent to the Museum in instalments during the current year by the same assiduous collector, and it adds 22 fresh species to the fauna. In order to render it a record complete to the end of the year 1881 of the species of butterflies inhabiting the Andaman Islands, several corrections have been made in the paper since it was read, and a few additional species, together with the names of the few forms which have been recorded by Mr. Moore but not

* Monatsbericht Ak. Wiss. Berlin, 1879, p. 931.